

MINUTES
Howard County School Health Council
October 5, 2016
(4:30pm-6:30pm)

Howard County Health Department (HCHD)
Barton A-B Conference Room
8930 Stanford Blvd
Columbia, MD 21045

Attendees: Cynthia Schulmeyer, Joan Webb Scornaienchi, Janet Munro, Sharon Hobson, Debi Lattimer, Jim Miller; Mike Senisi, Ekere Olojola, Eileen Singleton, Jackie Dougé, Rishma Gattu, Anne Markus, Alice Joo, Vicky Cutroneo, Deb Jung, Ann LeWinter, Frank Eastham, Christina Delmont-Small, Evan Fuller, Grace Lechmann, Nancy Xu, Mirian Ofonedu

I. Welcome and Introductions

Anne Markus

Chair opened the meeting at 4:37pm

II. Approval of Agenda & June Meeting Minutes

Motion

Anne Markus

Agenda and June meeting minutes were unanimously approved

III. Later Start Times: Update on HCPSS SSDT Committee

Frank Eastham, HCPSS, Executive Director, School Improvement and Administration
[CONFIRMED]

Frank Eastham provided an update on the progress of the HCPSS SSDT Committee. BoE charged HCPSS to look at models where MS and HS don't start before 8:15am. HCPSS contracted with University of Maryland to model different start times and the addition of buses needed as well as the estimated costs. Frank Eastham reported that two key factors to consider from the school system's perspective are (1) the severe shortage of school bus drivers across the nation, including in Howard County, and (2) the cost of new buses. The Committee met recently and identified general impact considerations. At the time of the meeting, Frank Eastham was still waiting for the Board to schedule a meeting for the board report. Phase IV includes community fora. It was not clear at the time whether the Board still wanted those to take place. Howard County has been looking to Fairfax's experience. Counterparts told Frank Eastham to "take your time." But at the same time, the school system needs to finalize bus contracts soon for next school year. The point is though that "somebody has to start first." The closer the start times are, the more exponential the increase in the number of buses needed. Cost estimates range from \$5 million to \$26 million additional annual expenditures. The model that is closest to the current number of buses (327, including special ed) is a model that estimates a total of 331 buses. This model has ES starting at 7:30 or 8:00am, MS at 8:30am, and HS at 9:15am. This would require changing the culture. HCPSS is waiting for final cost estimates. The budget forecast is no better than before. Other factor includes: Recreation and Parks agreements for installation/replacement costs (75%/25%); in return, HCPSS gives access to fields for evening activities; joint use agreement would have to be renegotiated. For Western part of the county, combining MS

and HS busing makes sense. For others, it doesn't. Traffic studies were also conducted. The drop dead deadline for contracts is December/January. The next option increases the number of buses by 25 at a cost of \$60,000 per bus. ES would start at 7:30am, MS at 9:15am, and HS at 8:30am, which may mean that middle school students are longer alone in the morning.

Discussion: Message should be "Later is Greater." Publicity campaign is needed to raise awareness that it is better and to alleviate fears. Deb Jung of the later start time local coalition chapter volunteered. Deb Jung also mentioned a study by the state chapter, which crunched data on Ann Arundel County and compared it to St Mary's (start time is 8 am), Garrett (start time is 8:25 am), and Washington County (start time is 8:45 am). The study seems to indicate that there is more absenteeism in Ann Arundel because of early start times. Deb Jung also mentioned an editorial she co-authored on this. The next Board meeting is scheduled for October 18 at 3pm. Need to act sooner rather than later if to be included in the FY 18 budget. The members discussed drafting a letter to each Board member, summarizing where things are to date, and requesting that the issue be put on the agenda as soon as possible. Janet Munro, Deb Jung and Anne Markus agreed to take the lead on drafting the letter and emailing it to the Board. The group also discussed reaching out to PTACHC with a similar letter, requesting the President to share the information with local PTAs and consider bringing up the issue at the next scheduled monthly meeting with the Board. Again, Janet Munro, Deb Jung and Anne Markus volunteered to follow up and email a letter to the PTACHC President.

IV. "Howard County Adolescent Mental Health Symposium: A Call to Action"

Update and Next Steps

Chair summarized the impetus for the symposium, the efforts of the planning committee over the summer to design a successful meeting, and the structure and output of this 1 day meeting that took place on September 27. Some information, including videos posted on YouTube, are available on the School Health Council website under "Events" at <http://www.howardcountyschoolhealthcouncil.com/events.html>. In addition, the planning committee agreed to morph into a newly-established ad hoc subcommittee of the School Health Council (now named HealthyMind Sub-Committee), which will meet for the first time in November to devise a charge, determine priorities, and next steps. More information on the Sub-Committee will be made available on the School Health Council website at <http://www.howardcountyschoolhealthcouncil.com/healthymind-sub-committee.html>. The Sub-Committee will be asked to present on its efforts at one of the upcoming general meetings of the School Health Council.

V. Public Input

None.

VI. Adjourn Meeting

Meeting adjourned at 5:40pm

NEXT MEETING IS ON DECEMBER 7, 2016